



## Transcript for the April 2011 Webchat

### DISPELLING MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT WHAT CAN BE DONE ON A TOURIST &/OR BUSINESS VISA (B1-B2)

Q: Can I apply for a tourist visa in the United Kingdom, if I am on holiday in the United Kingdom?

A: If you are legally present in the United Kingdom, then you may file a nonimmigrant visa application at the Embassy here in London. However, you must demonstrate that you will return to your residence abroad after your temporary stay in the United States.

Q: I am a Thai citizen living for 5 months of the year in the UK. I applied for a U.S. visa and was refused as I couldn't prove my ties to the UK. I renewed my UK visa for another 6 months and made a new appointment in London, but the visa was again denied because I couldn't show compelling reasons to return to UK after the holiday in the United States. How do I ensure my holiday in the United States isn't ruined please?

A: As the Embassy does not pre-adjudicate visa applications, we are unable to speculate on the outcome of any future application. The decision to approve or deny the application will be based on the interview and information provided orally. However, the consular officer may ask the applicant to provide documentary evidence of the following: (1) funds sufficient to cover all expenses while in the United States; and (2) a residence abroad to which he/she intends to return at the end of the stay in the United States. This is generally established by evidence of family, professional, property, employment or other ties and commitments to some country other than the United States sufficient to cause the applicant to return there at the conclusion of his/her stay. As each person's circumstances differ, there is no set form in which this evidence takes. The onus is on the applicant to present whatever he believes to be compelling evidence of residence abroad to which he will return.

Q: I have completed an electronic application form, DS-160, for a B-2 tourist visa. But, I don't have a surname listed in my passport so to continue the application form, I did not put a surname in the related box and the form was approved. During the appointment booking for an interview, I have given my second name as a surname. Will this discrepancy mean that my application is rejected?

A: Provided all the information entered in the online visa application form DS-160, resembles the bio data listed in your passport, this should not cause you any issue.

Q: I am aware that a UK Citizen with an E Passport can visit the United States (for less than 90 days) by land from Canada under the Visa Waiver Program. If that citizen then charts a U.S. yacht to visit Canadian waters, can he re-enter the United States on that vessel without a visa? If a visa is required, which is appropriate?

A: If applying to enter the United States at a Port of Entry on holiday, via private vessel or private aircraft you must possess a valid B-2 (tourist) visa.



Q: I'm Colombian and reside in the UK on a full time 4 year student visa. I want to apply for a U.S. tourist visa but wouldn't be using it until December 2011 for transit and April 2012 for a short holiday. Can I apply for a visa now, as I want to buy my plane tickets in advance? How long before I can apply for it and can I apply in London?

A: If you are legally present in the UK, you may apply for a visa at the Embassy here in London. We always recommend that individuals apply for visas well in advance of their proposed date of travel. No assurances regarding the issuance of visas can be given in advance. Therefore, final travel plans or the purchase of non refundable ticket should not be made until a visa has been issued and you are in receipt of the passport. For full details of the nonimmigrant visa application procedure, please refer to the Embassy website, at:  
<http://london.usembassy.gov/nonimmigrant-visas.html>

Q: On my way back from South America I intend to spend one day in New York. Form DS-160 requires some information which I do not have such as a contact in the United States. What should I provide for this section as I am planning to stay in New York for only one day before going back to London?

A: You must enter contact information on the form in order to proceed. You may wish to include the name and address of the hotel in which you intend to stay.

Q: I'm a Kenyan planning to visit the United States. I live in the UK. What should I do?

A: You will be required to apply for a B-2 (tourist) visa. Please visit the Embassy website at <http://london.usembassy.gov/nonimmigrant-visas.html> for additional information.

Q: How long should an Iranian passport with a U.S. visa be valid when traveling to the United States?

A: An Iranian passport must be valid for at least 6 months beyond the holders intended stay in the United States.

Q: Are B-1/B-2 visas issued before 9/11 still valid if they have not expired?

A: The U.S. Government no longer issues "indefinite" validity visas. The maximum validity period of a B-1/B-2 visa is ten years. The ten-year validity period applies regardless of the fact that the applicant may have previously held an "indefinite" visa. If you are traveling to the United States on holiday, you may, if qualified, be eligible to travel visa free to the United States under the Visa Waiver Program. For full details of the relevant qualification criteria, please refer to the Embassy website, at: <http://london.usembassy.gov/vwp3.html>. Please Note: if you are not qualified to travel under the Visa Waiver Program, you will be required to apply for the appropriate nonimmigrant visa.



Q: I intend to visit my Uncle in the United States during my summer holiday and I am applying for the B-2 Tourist visa and hope to book an interview at Easter. I will like to know how soon I need to call the Operator Assisted Service to get an interview date during the Easter break. I would also like to know what documents my Uncle needs to provide as my sponsor.

A: We always recommend that individuals apply for visas well in advance of their proposed date of travel. No assurances regarding the issuance of visas can be given in advance. Therefore, final travel plans or the purchase of a non refundable ticket should not be made until a visa has been issued and you are in receipt of the passport. For full details of the nonimmigrant visa application procedure, please refer to the Embassy website, at:

<http://london.usembassy.gov/nonimmigrant-visas.html> However, the consular officer may ask the applicant to provide documentary evidence of the following: (1) funds sufficient to cover all expenses while in the United States; and (2) a residence abroad to which he/she intends to return at the end of the stay in the United States. This is generally established by evidence of family, professional, property, employment or other ties and commitments to some country other than the United States sufficient to cause the applicant to return there at the conclusion of his/her stay. As each person's circumstances differ, there is no set form in which this evidence can be exhibited. The onus is on the applicant to present whatever he believes to be compelling evidence of residence abroad to which he will return.

Q: Further to my question regarding the Form DS-160, I would like correct my previous question and specify that on my way back from South America I will have 10 hour waiting at New York JFK Airport and my intentions were to spend one day in New York before flying back to London in the evening. In this case unfortunately I do not have a hotel reservation or any other contact information I can provide.

A: You may wish to list the airport which you will be transiting.

Q: I have a valid B-1/B-2 U.S. visa in my old passport (expired in December 2010) I have a new passport (Romanian) now valid until 2015. Do I need to transfer my valid visa from the old passport or can I just present both passports to the U.S. Immigration officer on arrival?

A: If the passport in which your visa has been endorsed has expired, the visa in the old passport still can be used, provided that you also carry a valid passport of the same nationality. Note: If, when canceling your old passport, the passport authority has clipped the corners of the passport, and, in so doing, has damaged the visa in any way, that visa is no longer valid and cannot be used for travel to the United States.

Q: I am staying in UK with a Work Permit (Tier 2 Visa), I have an Indian Passport. Could you please let me know whether I am eligible to apply for a B-2 tourist visa in London?

A: If you are legally present in the United Kingdom, then you may file a nonimmigrant visa application at the Embassy here in London.



Q: I am an Italian passport holder and I am planning to propose to my girlfriend in New York. She is living in the UK and has been issued with a Residency Card as my unmarried partner (she is a Thai National). I will disguise the trip as 'business related' and ask her to join me (on holiday). We can provide contracts, a lease for our flat, bank statements and plenty of other documents that show our relationship as genuine. Given that we are not married, is there any additional documentation that we should be providing in order to obtain a B-2 Visa for her? (I will be travelling under the Visa Waiver Program and I never been to the United States before).

A: As the Embassy does not pre-adjudicate visa applications, we are unable to speculate on the outcome of any future application. The decision to approve or deny the application will be based on the interview and information provided orally. However, the consular officer may ask the applicant to provide documentary evidence of the following: (1) funds sufficient to cover all expenses while in the United States; and (2) a residence abroad to which he/she intends to return at the end of the stay in the United States. This is generally established by evidence of family, professional, property, employment or other ties and commitments to some country other than the United States sufficient to cause the applicant to return there at the conclusion of his/her stay. As each person's circumstances differ, there is no set form in which this evidence takes. The onus is on the applicant to present whatever he believes to be compelling evidence of residence abroad to which he will return.

Q: Would your visa be valid if you change your Iranian passport?

A: If the passport in which your visa has been endorsed has expired, the visa in the old passport still can be used, provided that you also carry a valid passport of the same nationality. Note: If, when canceling your old passport, the passport authority has clipped the corners of the passport, and, in so doing, has damaged the visa in any way, that visa is no longer valid and cannot be used for travel to the United States.

Q: I have a visa issued in 1990 that is in a passport that expired in 1996 and the visa states valid indefinitely. Do I need to get an ESTA or can I use this visa along with my new passport.

A: The U.S. Government no longer issues "indefinite" validity visas. The maximum validity period of a B-1/B-2 visa is ten years. The ten-year validity period applies regardless of the fact that the applicant may have previously held an "indefinite" visa. If you are traveling to the United States on holiday, you may, if qualified, be eligible to travel visa free to the United States under the Visa Waiver Program. For full details of the relevant qualification criteria, please refer to the Embassy website, at: <http://london.usembassy.gov/vwp3.html>. Note: if you are not qualified to travel under the Visa Waiver Program, you will be required to apply for the appropriate nonimmigrant visa.



Q: I qualify for travel to the United States under the Visa Waiver Program. However, do I need to get a B-1 visa to go to the US if I'm going to enter professional golf tournaments with the potential to win prize money?

A: Professional athletes, such as golfers and auto racers, who receive no salary or payment other than prize money for his or her participation in a tournament or sporting event, may if qualified, travel visa free to the United States under the Visa Waiver Program. If you do not qualify to travel under the Visa Waiver Program, you will be required to apply for a B-1/B-2 visa.

Q: I will be travelling to the US on a B-1 visa for a 4-month stay. Can my wife and 2 young children join me on the same visa? If not, what visa do they need?

A: If your wife and children wish to accompany you to the United States for a period of 4 months, they will be required to apply for B-2 tourist visas. For full details of the application procedure, please refer to the Embassy website, at: <http://london.usembassy.gov/b2.html>.

Q: I am applying for a B-2 (tourist) visa for a holiday and I have filed the online DS 160 form and booked an appointment for a visa interview. My wife is also travelling with me, so should I file another DS 160 form? Can we attend interview together?

A: Both you and your wife will be required to file a Form DS-160. In addition, your wife will be required to schedule an appointment for a visa interview and pay an MRV application fee of \$140. To schedule an appointment, you will be required to contact the Embassy Operator Service on 09042 450 100 (1.23/min plus network extras).

Q: My passport got accidentally washed with my jeans. Since then it has also expired. I had a diplomatic visa at the time which as I was working for the Saudi Ambassador, I am a UK citizen. Can I somehow retrieve the Visa as I've been offered a job in Hollywood??? I didn't explain that properly, basically the Visa got waterlogged and damaged in the washing machine. Can I replace it? Even though I'm no longer working for the Saudi Ambassador?

A: If your passport and/or visa has been damaged you will be required to apply for a new visa in order to travel to the United States. For full details of the various nonimmigrant visa classifications, please refer to the Embassy website, at: <http://london.usembassy.gov/nonimmigrant-visas.html>

Q: I am a Chinese citizen and planning a trip to the United States in December. When can I start my visa application? Can I apply as early as possible?

A: We always recommend that individuals apply for visas well in advance of their proposed date of travel. No assurances regarding the issuance of visas can be given in advance. Therefore, final travel plans or the purchase of non refundable ticket should not be made until a visa has been issued and you are in receipt of the passport. For full details of the nonimmigrant visa application procedure, please refer to the Embassy website, at: <http://london.usembassy.gov/nonimmigrant-visas.html>

FILE\_ENDS